



Truths and myths about university

Activity overview

A worksheet-based activity which aims to help dispel some of the myths that surround university. Students can complete the activity individually, or in groups.

Learning objectives

- ▶ To de-bunk some of the common myths about going to university that might put students off applying.
- ▶ To ensure that students do not feel there are any barriers to them going to university.

Activity

- ▶ Ice-breaker activity: get students to share the funniest/silliest myth they have heard about going to university or what they generally have heard about going to university.
- ▶ Decide whether you are going to run this activity as an individual, pair-work or group activity.
- ▶ Distribute the worksheet, asking students to concentrate on the first side only. Ask students to decide whether they think that the statements are true or false.
- ▶ Ask students to discuss the rationale for their decision with their partner or group.
- ▶ Ask students to turn over the page to see the answers and check if they were right or not.
- ▶ Feed back as a whole class and ascertain which statements were most often answered incorrectly.

AT A GLANCE

- ★ **Age group**
14-16
- ★ **Activity type**
Worksheet-based discussion
- ★ **Suggested subject setting**
Try out this activity during form time or a tutor period, or as part of a General Studies programme or Careers teaching programme
- ★ **Student resources**
Worksheet: Truths and myths about university

Suggestions for 11-14

- ▶ If ICT facilities are available, ask students to search for common myths about university and then to share their findings with the group. A follow-on group discussion can enable you to de-bunk these myths.

Suggestions for 16-18

- ▶ 'University is only for the rich elite. Discuss.' Write this statement on the board and ask students to debate whether they think this is true. You could then distribute the 'Truths and myths about university' worksheet and run through it quickly.
- ▶ Concerns about support for those with disabilities - allay their fears by watching this short video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=irV-DsuOpHU.

Extension activities

- ▶ For 11-14 - Ask students to talk about the barriers they think might prevent young people from going to university and have a whole class discussion about these, ideally dispelling the barriers to help them raise their aspirations. If appropriate for the group, you can use some of the links above in the *Suggestions for 16-18* section.
- ▶ For 14-16 - Students should share other myths they have heard about going to university and

Discovering more

- ▶ The real story behind university entry requirements: www.which.co.uk/entryrequirements
- ▶ How to find out about bursaries and scholarships: www.which.co.uk/bursaries
- ▶ Money Saving Expert - student finance advice: www.moneysavingexpert.com/students/student-loans-tuition-fees-changes
- ▶ Access Professions - examples of aspiration raising events and activities: www.accessprofessions.com

Suggestions for 16-18 continued

- ▶ Look at other barriers to going to university such as not having the right academic profile: www.manchester.ac.uk/connect/teachers/students/post-16/manchester-access-programme.
- ▶ Talk sensitively about how to deal with parental pressure, e.g. parents who don't want you to go to university, parents who want you to study something you don't want to or go to a particular type of uni that you don't want to, parents putting pressure on you to get into a high-achieving university. Reassure students that they can express concerns to you or an appropriate member of staff and consider ways to combat sources of parental pressure, such as parent information evenings on higher education.

talk through whether these cause a real barrier to them applying. Focus specifically on qualification routes and how many different pathways students can follow to higher education.

- ▶ For 16-18 - Using ICT facilities, or an interactive whiteboard and teacher-led exposition, investigate the student finance options available using the Which? University website: www.which.co.uk/studentfinance